

SALT Meeting 12/11/23

Present: Mary Lou Vinson, Eric Falker, Heather Myers, Rae Vaught, Bob Richards, Chris Walls, Pete Larsen, (Jake was out of the country; Lezley had a school commitment).

Heather called the meeting to order with prayer at 7:06 pm.

Heather offered a devotion based on Matthew 2:1-12. When we encounter Jesus something changes. Leaving by a different way can mean both geographically and it can also mean a change in who we are because of the encounter.

Business:

- 1) Heather noted that the Pine Ridge Mission trip proposed by Zach DeYoung has not yet been approved officially by the SALT. The cost will be approximately \$800 per person plus travel, of which half will be due at signup, which could be as soon as this fall. Teams are limited in size so we should determine how many people are going so we can plan around group size, as well as think about travel arrangements and related issues. The mission trips are one week in length. Pastor Eric says that he and Zach will come up with a fundraising plan for this. What do we as a SALT want to say we will contribute as a church? Should this be tied to the amount of our payment to ministry shares? In other words, would we want to pay more for our own mission than we are contributing to the UMC's ministry shares?

The questions for tonight are: Can SALT approve this mission and let Zach DeYoung select the dates? The SALT says yes, by consensus.

What deposit and fund-raising commitment should we ask of those that are interested in going? To make this determination, we'd like more information at the January meeting from Zach about the financial plan, fundraising plan, etc. .

Pete suggested that we signify our strong interest and commitment to this tonight. Approved by consensus. Zach will attend the January SALT meeting and Pastor Eric will ask Zach to give more details on deposits, travel ideas, fundraising, church commitments, etc. at that time.

- 2) Our 2024 MI Conference Ministry Shares asking is \$14,176. We set a goal of paying 25%, or \$3544. To meet that goal, we only need to pay an additional \$792. Will SALT approve this amount? The consensus was yes, we should commit to this additional amount.
- 3) Do we want to approve the purchase of an AED for the church? (Average seems to be \$1500.) Heather has reached out to Zach DeYoung for his thoughts but has not heard back yet. Consensus was to put this on hold and put it on a "wish list" for the

congregation. If/when someone is looking for something tangible to donate this could be a suggestion.

Bob also suggested that we get an anti-choking device for the nursery. They are available online for \$25 or so. Bob will send the info out to all of us and Pastor Eric will get one for the nursery.

- 4) If we had a copy of Quicken on the church office computer, we could access financial information easier, using Caryn's backups. We have to purchase the software on a subscription. One year costs about \$40. Should we direct Caryn to purchase Quicken for the church office and bring the backup in once a month?

After discussion, we determined that the question is more related to “do we feel informed about expenses of the church right now?” more than a need to have the financial info at the church stored on that computer. Rather than pursuing the option of Quicken at this time, instead it would be helpful for Caryn to send out a report to us at the beginning of each month. We can revisit the Quicken discussion later if needed. Pete suggested that if helpful we could create a simple email group so that it is easy for Caryn to send out the info as part of her monthly process. We can revisit this with Caryn if needed.

- 5) How are we teaching stewardship and generosity to our congregation? As a leadership team, what role can we take in encouraging the congregation to support the mission and ministries of the church? What other questions do we have about church finances?

Pastor Eric mentioned that 18 cards were returned from the last stewardship campaign this fall. To Pastor Eric, this is more than about money, it is about educating people and highlighting the importance of the ministries of the church. We are still thanking people with the quarterly statements. Pastor Eric also sends thank you notes to people who offer larger gifts. We had some discussion about thanking people and noted the current plan of doing so with the quarterly statements. No action items were determined at this time but it is a topic we should continue to consider.

Bob suggests we also consider doing Salvation Army bell ringing as a church in future years.

- 6) Has everyone reviewed the church protection policy? Do we have any changes or additions? Do we have a motion for approval?

We have reviewed it and thanked Heather and Rae for their work on updating it.

The team recommended adding language about the elevator and that supervision ratio and policies should also be followed in outdoor settings (e.g., Memorial Garden). We suggested that the “six months active at GUMC” language prior to approval as a caregiver be amended to add “or as otherwise approved by the church leadership team”

(or similar language). This would help for situations where we might want to hire someone from outside the church for the nursery or related situations. Rae asked if we are currently following the policy with two people in our nursery. We need to clarify if we are ok with the current practice of one nursery worker as long as other adults are around and the door is open. Pastor Eric noted that for events, we need more than one adult always on premises but if doors are open or a window is available (as long as visibility is maintained and there are multiple adults at the event it should be compatible with the policy. Rae noted that this should be clear in the final wording.

- 7) Heather will be stepping down from the SALT in January. Who would like to be the 2024 SALT chair? Will we replace Heather's seat or move to a smaller board?

Pastor Eric went through the responsibilities of the chair: make the agenda, run the meetings, send out meeting notices, being able to ask people to volunteer (as we all need to do), and to occasionally sign things as needed for the church. There was some discussion with no obvious hand raised. Pastor Eric suggested that he could lead the January meeting and we could pray and discuss further. He does not want to do this on a regular basis but we could spend time in prayer thinking about this in January.

Next question, do we want to keep the size of the group the same? Consensus was that we will continue in the new year with the remaining members of the existing board and discuss the number of people going forward in the coming year.

- 8) Pastor Eric has a request regarding his vacations and camp counseling schedule.

Pastor Eric would like to go to Lake Louise again next summer. It is part of his ministry but would require him to be gone another Sunday. Are we ok with this? Pastor Eric goes to Painesdale once per quarter. Consensus is that the plan to go to do ministry at Lake Louise is ok with us. Pastor Eric indicated that Katja has agreed to preach that Sunday.

- 9) How might we improve security at our church? How might we increase fire safety? Can we approve a purchase of a new crash bar for the old entrance? (\$120. Need someone to install it. Can be done by a church member.)

Chris and Rae suggested that we make the repair. Approved by consensus.

- 10) Eric asked about the need for a new snowblower. Both the parsonage and church snowblowers have died. We can get by without one at the church right now because we have a snow removal service. To meet the need at the parsonage, Pastor Eric suggested buying a used blower from Abe's supply, which should meet the need nicely. Consensus was to proceed. \$990 is the final cost for a 2018 model.

8:20pm - Packet and Consent Calendar Items - Heather

Are there any corrections to the November minutes or request for action form? Do we have a covering motion for approval?

The minutes were sent out and there were no additions or corrections at this time.

Pastor Eric closed the meeting in prayer at 8:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pete Larsen